

Serial No. - 09/882,465
Art Unit - 2881

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the final paragraph of page 7 as follows:

Specifically, it is important to note that the sample stage 50 is not the microscope stage of the optical microscope 30 and, as such, is not part of the optical microscope 30. Rather, the sample stage support 60 supports or suspends the sample stage 50 at distal ends 62 of a plurality of suspension members 64 extending from the microscope coupling 40 and, as such, isolates the sample stage 50 from the optical microscope 30 and the microscope coupling 40. As is clearly illustrated in Fig. 4, the sample stage 50 is suspended from below said microscope coupling 40 while engaged with said coupling at points of contact defined at the distal ends 62 of the suspension members 64. The critical path coupling any low frequency vibrations generated in the optical microscope to a sample under examination runs from the optical microscope 30, through the microscope coupling 40, the sample stage support 60, and the sample stage 50, to the sample. The scanning probe microscope 20, the optical microscope 30, and the microscope coupling 40 define a microscope chassis 15 and the sample stage support 60 is configured to function as the sole significant source of vibro-mechanical coupling between the sample stage 50 and the microscope chassis. For the purposes of defining and describing the present invention, it is noted that a significant source of vibro-mechanical coupling comprises any source of coupling that would lead to detectable performance degradation of the combined microscope.
